**Minutes of Fogera third Innovation Platform meeting**

Date: March 15, 2012

Venue: Paradise Hotel Meeting Hall 2

Main meeting Agenda:

* Explanation of the community engagement process and screening the Participatory video to the Innovation Platform members
* Discussion and prioritization of key issues on land and water management
* Scenario construction on the selected land and water management issue
* Starting to Develop action plan

Alemayehu welcomed participants and chaired round of introduction. He then briefly mentioned the outcomes of the previous meeting.

**Participatory Video**

Aberrra explained the purpose and processes followed in the participatory video. The video was then screened to the participants. The main issues highlighted in the video are: free grazing, irrigation water use and soil erosion. Following the screening, IP members gave their feedback about the video. All of the feedbacks were positive and appreciate the importance of community involvement at all levels of research & development activities.

Ato Azmerwa, head of woreda Office of Agriculture, expressed his satisfaction with the video saying that farmers who participated in the making of the video are parts of the community. The video is a good learning tool and it reflects the reality as it shows how those who are closer to the problems discuss in order to solve their problems. He also mentioned that, the farmers proved their potential of: 1. Handling and operating the modern camera and related equipment without having any background of machine operation and literacy, but only few days of training 2. If given opportunity, they can identify their own problems and generate remedial options better than any external source.

It was also mentioned from Adet research center that PV is a good methodology in terms of involving farmers in the research process.

The video indicated about water stress due to irrigation expansion as well as lack of monitoring mechanism for the soil conservation work that has been done in the woreda. This shows how farmers are knowledgeable about changes in their locality and how this information could be useful for experts in the woreda.

There was also suggestion from Andassa research center that the farmer have identified their problems and put ways forward which can be coordinated with other stakeholders so that gaps can be filled in.

Amaled, DA from Dibasifatra Kebele expressed the importance of the video as it is always key to ensure community participation in project planning and implementation.

Many other IP members including development agents and heads of PA (Kebele) administration also expressed their appreciation of the process and the product and thanked both the farmers who made the film and the NBDC project staff who facilitated the process. They further asked if this video could be used as educational tool and its potential to influence the research & development process if screened to communities in other places.

Five of the twelve farmers who made the PV film attended the screening. More were invited to participate, but were not able due to seasonal farm activities. Those who attended the screening expressed their happiness to the IP members that they saw their product being screened to the higher level officials and the positive response from all the IP members.

**Scenario Development**

Issues like ‘Free grazing’ has been consistently mentioned in the previous meetings and the video also brought issues like water stress due to irrigation and soil erosion.

Some of the major problems which were being mentioned time and again are;

* Free grazing,
* Water problem (flooding during dry season and shortage during dry season),
* Soil erosion,
* Land shortage,
* Population pressure and
* Deforestation

Then participants discussed on the issues which they think are core problems.

**Core Problem - Deforestation**

* **Deforestation and Land degradation**: selected as a core problem driven by population pressure which contributed to high population of livestock as way of income source, hence leading to over grazing and more pressure on the land. This also means more land under cultivation leading to less feed for livestock as grazing land shrinks at the cost of farm lands. Clearing of forests also means less infiltration which leads to run off causing soil erosion.

**Major cause to the core Problem – Free grazing**

* **Free grazing:** was also put as a major cause in terms of hindering attempts of afforestation as well as contributor to soil erosion. Participants mentioned that to address the key problem, they have to address free grazing as it is leading to the disappearance of grass species, emergence of weed species, over grazing hence soil erosion, and trampling of newly planted seedlings. It was mentioned that neither afforestation nor soil and water conservation programs would be sustainable unless the issue of free grazing is addressed. Therefore, free grazing has been identified as the core issue to be addressed

**With and without scenario development**

Once the core issue, ‘free grazing’ was identified, discussions went on to list down anticipated results with and without interventions. This is to mean what would happen if one intervenes to address the problem and what would happens if one does not intervene to address the problem.

Participants then discussed and listed down some of the possible results of free grazing if the case not addressed (no intervention) and if addressed (intervention)

Table 1: Anticipated results of free grazing when there is intervention and no intervention

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Possible results of free grazing if there is no intervention** | **Possible results if there is intervention to free grazing problem** |
| Conflict due to competition over resources | Land degradation will be addressed |
| Scarcity of animal products (low productivity, breed decline) | Biodiversity will be conserved, grass species which had been destroyed would emerge |
| Livestock would browse and trample seedlings installed for biological control of soil erosion, which means increased soil erosion. Also less grass species | Trampling would be addressed, hence more stable soil and water conservation structures and more trees, hence less soil erosion |
| No social duty. Eg. Affects schooling of children as some of them remain behind to keep livestock | Rehabilitation of natural resources; restoration of soil fertility and water resources |
| Animal and human health will not improve | Livestock water productivity will be improved |
| difficult to manage river | Income will increase |
| degrade natural resources e.g water resources |  |
| Crop destruction |  |
| Dam destruction |  |
| poverty |  |

Then the participants were asked to mention some of the issues they think will be challenges or risks to address the issues of free grazing.

* Implementation of bylaws (implementing agents may not be effective)
* Support that is needed from government to work on issues of free grazing may not be provided
* Feed supply to feed livestock
* Veterinary and AI service
* Community long standing cultural practice; which is characterized by having large stocks
* Joint venture of all stakeholders is a must, if not difficult. Ensuring commitment from every stakeholder is a challenge
* Preconditions for stall feeding is must; hence fulfilling all the preconditions is a challenge
* Finance and input supply
* Fodder and breed
* Ensuring community participation in decision making

At last participants were asked how many years from now they think would the issue of free grazing be addressed. They said that they are optimistic and in the next 10 or 15 years, it will be addressed as long as it is implemented with community participation and mobilization of key stakeholders.

It was also mentioned that to deal with issues of free grazing one has to first work on the preconditions that should be fulfilled. And the following points were mentioned as some of the key activities that should be taken into consideration as a way forward;

* Preparing various discussion forums so as to start dialogue, raising awareness and mobilizing communities.
* Sharing experiences of good practices by working on a pilot learning site/s
* introducing inputs and technology (fodder varieties, breeds)
* reducing local breeds
* alternative income source to livestock e.g apiculture
* Veterinary services
* -stakeholder mobilization – e.g joint operation or process

**Actors’ roles and responsibilities**

Discussions were also started on identifying some key actors’ and the roles they might play in the process.

* Research institutes (Adet and Andassa) – technology introduction
* NGO (EWNRA) and office of agriculture – piloting
* Mobilization plus awareness – extension, office of agriculture
* community representatives
* Environmental protection and land administration
* Administration

**Action Points for the next meeting:**

* Developing action plan and workout line on the preconditions that have to be fulfilled for addressing the issue of free grazing
* Sharing roles and responsibilities
* Introduction of the local challenge fund

**List of Participants of the third Innovation Platform meeting, Fogera wereda, March 15, 2012**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No** | **Name** | **Office** | **Role/Responsibility** | **Contact Number** |
| **1** | Azmeraw Minlargeleh | Woreda Office of Agriculture | Head | 0584460027/0918280930 |
| 2 | Keffie Minale | Ethio Wetlands and Natural Resources Association (EWNRA) | Field office coordinator | 05844660943/0918706794 |
| 3 | Belay Dejen | Woreda Office of Agriculture | Livestock Development Process owner | 0584460027/0918094921 |
| 4 | Tesfaye Hailesilassie | Office of Agriculture | Extension team leader | 058446011/0918711059 |
| 5 | Mengistu Shumet | Woreda office of water resource development | expert | 0584461257/0918247887 |
| 6 | Dereje Getachew | Woreda Office of Agriculture | Loan expert | 0584460048/0918711127 |
| 7 | Chalachew Molla | Woreda Office of Agriculture | Natural resource management process owner | 0584460695/0918071399 |
| 8 | Begashaw Asnakaw | Woreda Office of Agriculture | Irrigation expert | 0584460064/0918767431 |
| 9 | Mulunesh Asres | Woreda Office of Agriculture | Early warning process owner | 0584460695/0918094421 |
| 10 | Getnet Asfaw | Woreda office of finance and economic development | Vice head | 0584460459/0918009718 |
| 11 | Wuletaw Terefe | Woreda Office of Agriculture | Development Agent-  Kokit kebele | 0918094351 |
| 12 | Wassihun baye | Woreda Office of Agriculture | Development Agent-Wej Arba Amba kebele | 0918021544 |
| 13 | Amaled Assefa | Woreda Office of Agriculture | Development Agent-Dibasifatra kebele | 0918027148 |
| 14 | Kerealem Ejigu | Andassa Livestock Research Center | Researcher and center director | 0918340110 |
| 15 | Abebech Abera | Adet Agricultural Research Center | Irrigation Researcher | 0588389001/0912355890 |
| 16 | Zerihun Nigussie | Bahir Dar university | Lecturer | 0911862866 |
| 17 | Abdela Mohammed | EDGET Project (SOS-SAHEL Ethiopia) | Field officer | 0582200258/0913479717 |
| 18 | Abera Fente | Abua Kokit Kebele | Kebele Administrator | 0924359676 |
| 19 | Walelign Zegeye | Wej Arba Amba kebele | Kebele Administrator |  |
| 20 | Wubanchi Fasil | Abua Kokit Kebele (PV film maker) | Farmer |  |
| 21 | Abiba Ayele | Abua Kokit Kebele (PV film maker) | Farmer |  |
| 22 | Muchie Mekonnen | Abua Kokit Kebele (PV film maker) | Farmer |  |
| 23 | Assefa Kasa | Alember Kebele (PV film maker) | Farmer |  |
| 24 | Almaz Tarekegn | Alember Kebele (PV film maker) | Farmer |  |
| 25 | Mulugeta Lemenih | International Water Management Institute | Researcher | 0912066839 |
| 26 | Aberra Adie | International Livestock Research Institute | Researcher | 0910756003 |
| 27 | Alemayehu Belay | International Livestock Research Institute | Researcher | 0911885535 |